

Adult ADD: Learning To Communicate Effectively With ADD

Contributed by Tellman Knudson And Stephanie Frank

Do you have adult ADD? Have you ever gone around and around with somebody and you spend 45 minutes to get your point across when the point is you are both saying the same thing but in a completely different way? Then, you finally figure it out, if you're lucky. That often happens to people with ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder). What if you could eliminate that?

People with and without ADD have probably all had that experience of meeting someone and immediately becoming best friends. It's almost like you've known this person your entire life. Other times, you meet someone and you really want to get along with them very well, you really wish you'd like the person, but you just can't stand being around them.

It's all about communication.

When communication breaks down, there's a loss of credibility. If you insult someone, you're insulted by someone, or get into an argument with someone, and there are any bad feelings—even just neutral feelings—most of the time it's due to poor communication, and that could be connected to ADD. Or, it's just that no one ever taught you how to communicate. They said, "Hey, just get along." That didn't teach you a single thing. That feels horrible too. Nobody sets out to communicate poorly with other people, and ADD could be the reason for some of these issues.

Why is it that some statistics show that over 80% of the people in prison right now are possibly diagnosable with ADD? Does that tell you that people with ADD have a hard time communicating with other people?

That could be one indicator. There are all sorts of ways that these things break down. Sometimes, with ADD, you can feel very alone, very isolated, very in a box and have nowhere to go, no one to turn to. You don't know what you're going to do. It's as if no one understands you.

One of the things that happens when you learn to communicate better is that all of a sudden, you're able to make rapid progress with communicating and with ADD. Some people seem to have a golden touch — they seem to be able to get anything they want in life, even with ADD — they're naturally just really good communicators.

Granted, you can have an amazing communicator with no ethics, with or without ADD. That's the worst type of communicator in my opinion. You can have ADD people who are great at communication, who have a very low ethical standard, who still can go out and get almost anything they want in life. When you, have a high ethical standard, and are an amazing communicator, then it's the best of both worlds.

This can be brought down to our personal relationships as well, which ADD can complicate. For instance, what if you just want a hug from your partner, where you wish they could read your mind and just come over and give you a hug because you really need it? Why don't you just say, "I need a hug?" You get what you want.

It's very simple stuff, but you have to know what to do. You have to have some guidelines. Once you conquer this problem and take control over your ADD, you can get rid of misunderstandings. You can get rid of arguments.

Some people like to argue for the heck of it. That's a little different. We're talking about arguments due to miscommunication. On the other hand, let's talk about this realistically.

When you become an expert communicator, does that mean you will never have another disagreement or argument again? Of course not. It means you will be able to handle it a lot better. In a much shorter amount of time you can diffuse the situation and have both, or all of, the people involved walking away, feeling good about the solution.

Use your ADD to focus, and have a constructive argument or difference of opinion without getting a lot of emotional push and pull into the whole situation.

That's the whole idea.

And there's another benefit: When you're able to start communicating, it's more than just one on one. You're able to start influencing entire groups of people.

If you have a good message, if you're trying to use ADD to do something big and important, if you are going after something in your life, influencing and being able to communicate with 10, 20, 30, 100, 1000, 10,000 people at a time effectively is an incredibly powerful skill.

The cool part is that it's almost identical to being able to do this effectively with one person. The same skill set just

twisted a little bit, a slightly different way, you can learn to, very quickly, reach out to many people and they will all understand what you're saying. Not only will they understand what you are saying, but they will give you credibility. They will see you as a credible person. You'll stop thinking of yourself as a person with ADD, and start seeing yourself as a great communicator.

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